



Journal of the Senate

Number 4—Special Session A

Thursday, December 14, 2000

CONTENTS

Call to Order	11
Remarks	12
Resolutions	11
Special Guests	11

CALL TO ORDER

The Senate was called to order by President McKay at 2:00 p.m. A quorum present—39:

Mr. President	Dawson	Laurent	Sanderson
Bronson	Diaz de la Portilla	Lawson	Saunders
Brown-Waite	Dyer	Lee	Sebesta
Burt	Garcia	Meek	Silver
Campbell	Geller	Miller	Smith
Carlton	Holzendorf	Mitchell	Sullivan
Clary	Horne	Peaden	Villalobos
Constantine	Jones	Posey	Wasserman Schultz
Cowin	King	Pruitt	Webster
Crist	Latvala	Rossin	

Excused: Senator Klein

PRAYER

At the request of the President, Secretary Blanton read the following devotional entitled *Through the Fire*:

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

Isaiah 43:2 (NIV)

"Lately, I understand how Job must have felt," the woman said. "Sometimes I think if I knew why I was having to face problems, I could deal with them better."

But in the back of my mind, I wondered, "Would knowing the whys of hardship and suffering really satisfy me? Would understanding ease the pain?"

There are many difficult situations in our lives. It may be years before understanding comes, if ever. Maybe it is less important to know why we suffer and more important to know that we can trust God to bring us safely through the bad times, to know that we can depend on God's grace and sufficiency.

In the middle of a crisis, sometimes the only prayer we can articulate is, "Lord, help me." And I have learned that even in the fires of life, we can depend on God's promise, "I will be with you."

Lord, help us to sense your presence even in the bad times. Keep us safe and bring us through the fires of life. Thank you for your strength. Thank you for being our refuge and may we ask for your continued blessing on the United States of America. Amen.

PLEDGE

Senator Bronson led the Senate in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

INTRODUCTION OF FORMER SENATOR

The President introduced former Senate President James Scott who was present in the chamber.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

On motion by Senator Silver—

By Senators Silver, McKay, Bronson, Brown-Waite, Burt, Campbell, Carlton, Clary, Constantine, Cowin, Crist, Dawson, Diaz de la Portilla, Dyer, Garcia, Geller, Holzendorf, Horne, Jones, King, Klein, Latvala, Laurent, Lawson, Lee, Meek, Miller, Mitchell, Peaden, Posey, Pruitt, Rossin, Sanderson, Saunders, Sebesta, Smith, Sullivan, Villalobos, Wasserman Schultz and Webster—

SR 4-A—A resolution recognizing the hard work of the citizens of this state following the election held on November 7, 2000, and urging the discontinuation of partisan attacks.

WHEREAS, this state and the United States of America experienced on November 7, 2000, the closest presidential election in history, and

WHEREAS, since November 8, 2000, thousands of Floridians have worked tirelessly and effectively to ensure that the votes cast in this state were counted accurately and completely under extreme circumstances and with the entire world watching, and

WHEREAS, the results of this 2000 Presidential Election were contested in the state and federal courts, and

WHEREAS, understandably, this election contest has stirred partisan passions on all sides of the issue and across the political spectrum, and

WHEREAS, these partisan passions have led to increasing and repeated attacks on members of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, including members of county canvassing boards throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, the balance of government provides for a system of checks and balances and invites debate and scrutiny of the decisions made by officers of these branches of government, but does not invite personal attacks, and

WHEREAS, these attacks have become personal in nature and have gone beyond the acceptable realm of debate, NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

That the Florida Senate finds these attacks to be harmful, offensive, divisive, unnecessary, and unwarranted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida Senate recognizes the hard work of its citizens, does not condone these personal attacks on the three branches of government, and urges all those involved in this public debate to cease the malicious ad hominem attacks.

—was introduced out of order and read in full. On motion by Senator Silver, **SR 4-A** was read the second time by title and adopted.

The vote on adoption was:

Yeas—39

Mr. President	Burt	Clary	Crist
Bronson	Campbell	Constantine	Dawson
Brown-Waite	Carlton	Cowin	Diaz de la Portilla

Dyer	Latvala	Peaden	Silver
Garcia	Laurent	Posey	Smith
Geller	Lawson	Pruitt	Sullivan
Holzendorf	Lee	Rossin	Villalobos
Horne	Meek	Sanderson	Wasserman Schultz
Jones	Miller	Saunders	Webster
King	Mitchell	Sebesta	

Nays—None

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT JOHN M. MCKAY

Senators, we have had an extraordinarily close glimpse at history. Our state was faced with the almost unprecedented task of having to protect Florida's electoral votes—and without the benefit of any historical guidelines to mark the way. Rather than losing our way, we have followed our instincts.

As events unfolded on a sometimes-hourly basis and were broadcast to the nation, the gravity of the situation and the import of our actions hit home. We said time and again that we would be cautious in our words and actions. We relied on the sound counsel of our members. We engaged experts with insight and expertise in this complex legal area.

All advised us that we must be ready to provide a "safe harbor" so Florida's voters were not disenfranchised. Don't misunderstand what happened here in these chambers. Although we did not take legislative action, your time and efforts were wisely invested.

If not for the Legislature's participation, specifically the amicus briefs with the U.S. Supreme Court, I firmly believe that we could not stand here today with the conviction that this issue is resolved. Vice President Gore, in an undeniably difficult speech, was gracious and conciliatory. President-elect Bush was articulate in expressing the need to heal our country and work on issues important to Americans.

I would like to thank Speaker Feeney and the House of Representatives for their efforts to ensure that Florida's votes were protected. And please allow me to extend my sincere appreciation to each of you for the manner in which you have handled this matter.

It is now time for all of us to turn our attention back to the issues that are most important to the people we serve. I look forward to working side-by-side with each of you to improve the lives of Floridians. In the New Year, we will gather with a renewed spirit to achieve our many common goals. But for now, it's time for all of us to enjoy the holidays with our families and friends. Best wishes to you and your families for a happy and healthy holiday season and New Year.

CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

The Journal of December 13 was corrected and approved.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Senator Lee, the Senate in Special Session adjourned sine die at 2:16 p.m.